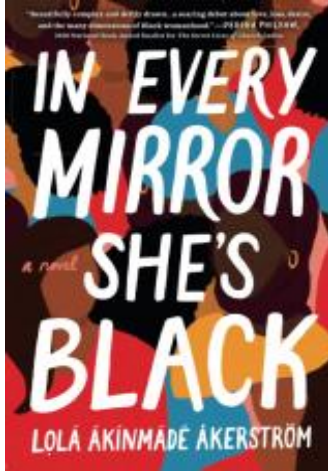


In Every Mirror She's Black

by Lolá Ákínmádé Ákerström



About the Book

An arresting debut for anyone looking for insight into what it means to be a Black woman in the world.

Successful marketing executive Kemi Adeyemi is lured from the U.S. to Sweden by Jonny von Lundin, CEO of the nation's largest marketing firm, to help fix a PR fiasco involving a racially tone-deaf campaign. A killer at work but a failure in love, Kemi's move is a last-ditch effort to reclaim her social life.

A chance meeting with Jonny in business class en route to the U.S. propels former model-turned-flight-attendant Brittany-Rae Johnson into a life of wealth, luxury and privilege --- a life she's not sure she wants --- as the object of his unhealthy obsession.

And refugee Muna Saheed, who lost her entire family, finds a job cleaning the toilets at Jonny's office as she works to establish her residency in Sweden and, more importantly, seeks connection and a place she can call home.

Told through the perspectives of each of the three women, *IN EVERY MIRROR SHE'S BLACK* is a fast-paced, richly nuanced yet accessible contemporary novel that touches on important social issues of racism, classism, fetishization and tokenism, and what it means to be a Black woman navigating a white-dominated society.

Discussion Guide

1. We see three very different Black women in this novel. How do you think each of their backgrounds informed the choices they made?

2. The themes of tokenism and fetishization are prominent in this book. Discuss how they each played out with the women and what impact that had on them in the book.
3. There are many comparisons between Swedish and American societies. What did you find different about how the two countries handled issues of racism and sexism? Was there something about the setting in Stockholm that changed your perspective about the social issues tackled in this book?
4. Kemi seems to make a spur-of-the-moment choice to move to Sweden. Why do you think she did this? How did her sister's opinion factor into her decision?
5. Jonny's infatuation with Brittany borders on unhealthy, and yet there is a part of her that is drawn to him in the beginning. What about him do you think she found appealing? How did her past relationships factor in?
6. At Brittany's birthday party, Kemi awkwardly stumbles during their conversation and insults Brittany. Why do you think the author chose not to have these two Black women become friends?
7. Muna experiences a tremendous amount of loss in the novel. What do her experiences show of the struggles refugees go through when displaced from their homes?
8. Kemi's relationship with Ragnar is unhealthy almost from the start. What does her final interaction with him show about her own growth and what she's learned about herself in Sweden?
9. Throughout the novel, Muna develops many short-lived relationships, with the longest being her uncomfortable acquaintance with Yagiz. Why do you think these relationships are transient, and what do you think the author is trying to convey in her relationship with Yagiz?
10. Jonny's privilege and the protection his money affords him ultimately become problematic for Brittany and her child. What do you think the author was trying to say about wealth, choice and accountability at the end of Brittany's story?
11. Kemi, Brittany and Muna only have one small interaction with all three of them on the page together. Why do you think the author chose for them not to interact more?

Author Bio

Nigerian-American and based in Sweden, Lolá Ákínmádé Åkerström is an award-winning author, speaker and photographer. Her work has appeared in *National Geographic*, BBC, CNN, *The Guardian*, *Sunday Times Travel*, *The Telegraph*, *New York Times*, *Travel + Leisure*, *Slate*, Travel Channel, *Adventure Magazine* and *Lonely Planet*, amongst others.

In addition to contributing to several books, she is the author of the following books: the 2018 Lowell Thomas Award winner for best travel book, *DUE NORTH*; the bestselling *LAGOM: Swedish Secret of Living Well*, available in 18

foreign language editions; and the internationally acclaimed IN EVERY MIRROR SHE'S BLACK.

She has been recognized with multiple awards for her work, including being named a 2022 Hasselblad Heroine and receiving the 2018 Travel Photographer of the Year Bill Muster Award. She was honored with a MIPAD 100 (Most Influential People of African Descent) Award within media and culture in 2018. She contributed to *National Geographic*'s Image Collection.

She is based in Stockholm.

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